

In October 2015, I was out in the yard  
I'd just finished splitting up the scrap two-by-fours into kindling  
I glanced up at the half-moon, pink, chill refinery cloud light  
Two big black birds flew over, their wings whooshing and low  
Two ravens, but only two  
Their black feathers tinted in the sunset

I knew these birds were omens but of what I wasn't sure  
They were flying out toward the island where we hoped to move  
You were probably inside, you were probably aching, wanting not to die  
Your body transformed  
I couldn't bear to look so I turned my head west, like an early death  
Now I can only see you on the fridge in lifeless pictures

And in every dream I have at night, and in every room I walk into  
Like here, where I sit the next October, still seeing your eyes  
Pleading and afraid, full of love  
Calling out from another place, because you're not here  
I watched you die in this room, then I gave your clothes away  
I'm sorry, I had to, and now I'll move

I will move with our daughter  
We will ride over water  
With your ghost underneath the boat  
What was you is now burnt bones  
And I cannot be at home  
I'm running, grief flailing

The second time I went to Haida Gwaii was just me and our daughter  
Only one month after you died, my face was still contorted  
Driving up and down, boots wet inside, aimless and weeping  
I needed to return to the place where we discovered that childless, we could  
blanket ourselves in the moss there for our long lives

But when we came home, you were pregnant  
And then our life together was not long;  
You had cancer and you were killed and I'm left living like this  
Crying on the logging roads with your ashes in a jar  
Thinking about the things I'll tell you  
When you get back from wherever it is that you've gone  
But then I remember death is real

And I'm still here in Masset, it's August 12th, 2016  
You've been dead for one month and three days, and we are sleeping in the fo  
rest  
There is sand still in the blankets from the beach  
Where we released you from the jar  
When we wake up, all the clothes that we left out are cold and damp just fro  
m the air permeating, the ground opens up

Surrounded by growth; nurse logs with layers of moss and life  
Young cedars, the sound of water, thick salal, and God-like huckleberries  
The ground absorbs and remakes whatever falls, nothing dies here  
But here is where I came to grieve, to dive into it with you, with your abse  
nce, but I keep picking you berries